



**The World Bank**

The Skilling Up Lebanon (SUL) Project (P176444)

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**BEIRUT DIGITAL DISTRICT (BDD) TALENT  
DEVELOPMENT HUB  
THE SKILLING UP LEBANON (SUL) PROJECT  
P176444**

**Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)**

**10-May-2021**



### ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AUB	American University of Beirut
BDD	Beirut Digital District
DT	Digital Technology
E&S	Environmental and Social
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
GM	Grievance Mechanism
HR	Human Resources
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SEA	Sexual, Exploitation and Abuse
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SH	Sexual Harassment
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics
SUL	Skilling Up Lebanon
UX	User Experience
WB	World Bank
WDR	World Development Report



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## 1. Introduction

*Advancements in technologies will continue to have an increasingly significant impact on jobs in the coming years and decades. According to the 2019 World Development Report (WDR)<sup>1</sup>, technologies are having an impact on how firms operate, creating new business models and expanding job opportunities. Technology also opens opportunities to create new tech-enabled independent work as well as entrepreneurial activities. In the World Economic Forum’s “Future of Jobs Report 2020”, it is estimated that 85 million jobs will be displaced by 2025 while 97 million jobs will be created that tend to require a higher level of digital skills. The skill sets that are in high demand today did not exist five years ago and the pace of this trend is expected to accelerate. The most in-demand skills according to an analysis of LinkedIn job postings revealed that the most in demand hard skills for 2020 are Blockchain, Cloud Computing, Analytical Reasoning, Artificial Analysis, UX Design and Business Analysis. In addition, the changing nature of work significantly raises the expectation of having multiple careers which requires continuous, lifelong learning.*

*The lockdown period due to COVID-19 health crisis accelerated and showcased the importance of digitalization and digital transformation. Although social distancing, lockdowns and temporary closure of stores has led to dramatic impact on firms, at the same time, it led to a sharp increase in online and delivery services. Firms that had better digital processes in place, a workforce with more advanced digital skills and an overall more comprehensive digital infrastructure were more resilient and were able to shift smoothly their operations and adapt to the new reality. Some businesses are now working remotely by leveraging e-commerce platforms, particularly for food and grocery shopping. Similarly, educational platforms have risen considerably given the closure of all schools and universities nationwide. Thus, firms’ transitioning to new digital business models could help mitigate the impact of the outbreak and keep their operations running smoothly in the short term and improve productivity over the long term. The COVID-19 lockdown derived some lessons and can serve as the catalyst for greater reliance upon digital platforms and services. Now, more than ever, all workers, including those in vulnerable communities, will need to have basic digital skills at a bare minimum and in most cases intermediate to advanced digital skills in order to remain or rejoin the workforce as demand for tech-enabled, digital economic opportunities will continue to rise.*

*The Lebanese workforce is ill-equipped with skills to thrive in a digital economy, and without the right skills the country may not benefit from the opportunities afforded by disruptive technologies and digital firms. Lebanon’s educational curriculum is outdated, and it does little to provide students with the necessary market-relevant digital skills. In the digital age, the in-demand market skills are constantly evolving whereas the Lebanese educational system is rigid and focuses more on content rather than competencies. According to the recently launched Human Capital Index<sup>2</sup>, a child born in Lebanon today will only be 52 percent as productive as they could be had they enjoyed complete education and full health. Also, the lack of good quality work experience today undermines future job prospects and lowers future growth potential. Without the right skillsets, youth can become marginalized, disappointed and frustrated - characteristics that can contribute to social unrest.*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/816281518818814423/pdf/2019-WDR-Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>The index measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18.



## 2. Project Description

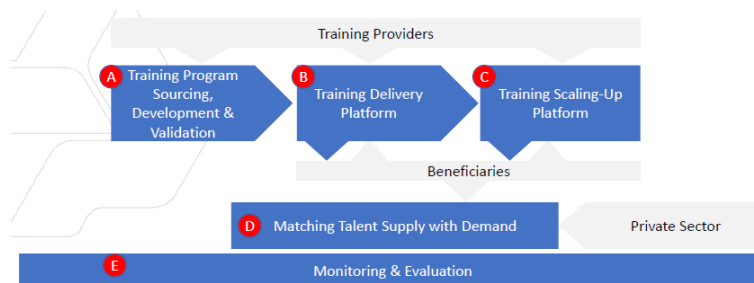
The proposed project will support the promotion of digital skills under the Skilling Up Lebanon (SUL) initiative launched by the World Bank in 2019. This initiative aims to prepare young women and men for the local, regional and global jobs of the future and to attract digital technology (DT) players to invest in the region. The specific outcomes expected for this component are to: (i) provide a proof of concept for the PPP model proposed under the SUL with a view to attract additional funding to scale up and sustain the model; (ii) design and implement five pilot digital skills programs and train approximately 800 young men and women.

Overall project structure: 2 components

### Component 1: Support to the SUL PPP model (US\$150,000)

This component will provide financial and technical support to the Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub, to establish the SUL model. The BDD, a tech hub and community hosting about 1,600 members and 150 companies all working in the tech industry, has been selected as the SUL anchor given its unique position in the Lebanese digital ecosystem as both a provider and user of digital skills. It has established an NGO called the BDD Talent Development Hub<sup>3</sup> whose objective is to close the skills gap and upskill the workforce in Lebanon with the necessary and relevant digital skills to thrive in the local and global economy.

For the implementation of the SUL model, BDD Talent Development Hub prepared a preliminary framework summarized in the figure below. The proposed framework includes the design and incubation of skills development programs, training platforms, Career and Matching platform, and monitoring and evaluation tools. In this framework, BDD Talent Development Hub will work closely with the educational ecosystem (universities, schools, etc.) to allow training curriculum providers to maximize their impact through, for example, working with universities and schools to target students and provide them with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) and entrepreneurship education, raising awareness on the importance of strengthening the digital skill sets amongst youth for the jobs of today and children for the jobs of tomorrow.



Source: Beirut Digital District

The proposed project will finance the following activities :

- (a) **Setting up the Team:** the following individuals will be hired through a competitive process: Executive

<sup>3</sup> <https://beirutdigitaldistrict.com/bdd-academy>



Director, Program Manager, Communications Coordinator and Program Coordinator. The program coordinator will also be the Environmental and Social(E&S) focal point to follow-up on the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Grievance log and reporting. The team will be responsible for the following:

- (i) **Establishment of the governance structure:** The Governance structure of SUL will need to be developed and qualified members recruited. It is expected to be composed of two categories of committees: (a) SUL Steering committee that will provide strategic direction and oversee implementation; and (b) SUL Technical Committees: with the training provider selection committee which will aim to assess programs validity and ensure high-quality skills provision standards as well as the private sector committee which will identify employment opportunities and training needs.
  - (ii) **Establishment of partnerships:** BDD Talent Development Hub will develop tailored agreements with a network of international and local partners either through contractual arrangements or Memoranda of Understanding. Different types of partnerships would be developed: training providers for access to high-quality curricula and trainers, private-sector employers and recruiters to provide internships, projects and job opportunities to SUL trainees, ecosystem players (government, schools, universities, etc.) as well as certification providers, such as leading cloud services certification bodies. BDD will also explore the possibility of partnering with continuing education centers at universities, such as the AUB Continuing Education Center, and large corporations from a variety of sectors in order to maximize the outreach of the program and to make the program more sustainable.
  - (iii) **Launch and management of the Training Grant Program:** The team will be launching a competitive call for proposals to design and implement market-relevant digital skills trainings. Once proposals have been approved, the team will oversee their implementation and ensure a consistent and effective monitoring and evaluation. More details on this Training Grant Program are provided in the next component.
  - (iv) **Release of a job market digest:** BDD Talent Development Hub will develop a job market digest that will provide information on jobs openings in the digital and creative sectors in Lebanon; it will also tackle overseas companies and expats who want to outsource projects to Lebanon.
- (b) **Setting up of systems and processes:** The following two key systems and processes would need to be put in place: (a) a *Career and Internship Portal* that will provide SUL beneficiaries with an effective means to find and apply to suitable job openings; and (b) *M&E processes and tools* to enable consistent monitoring across providers and allow for accurate output measurement of the activities implemented.
- (c) **Development of marketing and branding:** BDD Talent Development Hub will develop the SUL online presence on the web and on Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.). It will also develop a marketing and outreach strategy campaign detailing the different approach and messages for key categories of stakeholders.

### **Component 2: Support to Digital Skills pilots (US\$200,000)**

*This component will finance the design and implementation of five pilot digital skills programs by the BDD Talent Development Hub. The Hub will leverage the job market digest methodology and the private sector committee to ensure that the developed programs are based on the real skill needs of the digital economy*



sector. These pilots will equip the BDD Hub with key learnings that will feed into the subsequent development programs of the SUL. The aim is to train 800 youth through these pilots.

*One pilot will be focused on raising awareness of the importance of digital skills as early as in schools, another pilot will provide internship opportunities for youth in the digital sector to gain on-the-job experience, while the other three proposals will provide digital skills trainings.* Each training will have clear eligibility criteria for the selection of candidates. Some trainings will require academic bar or threshold which every candidate would need to cross prior to being accepted into a training. This academic threshold could be set very low or could be higher, depending on the type of training to be conducted. This will ensure that each beneficiary has the minimum requirement to succeed in the course. One of the pilots will cover a career guidance program for secondary school students (15-18 years old) to expose them to the various opportunities in the digital market, specifically in light of the changing nature of jobs resulting from technology, accelerated by the COVID-19 Pandemic mandated lockdowns. A second pilot will provide university students (18-25 years old) with on the job training opportunities in the digital and creative sector to provide them with a practical job experience that increases the chances of their employability. The remaining three pilots will be defined based on the initial discussions with the private sector where we would be probing for their needs. The program would include career orientation and soft skills development workshops to prepare them for the job market. Participating corporations that seek to employ full-timers at the end of internship would be prioritized. The remaining three pilots for working or unemployed professionals will be selected based on the outcome of the job market digest, and will cover some of the following topics:

- Computer Sciences / Emerging Tech Intensive Bootcamp to train unemployed Computer Science / Computer engineering university graduates with the aim to bridge the gap between academia and market requirements
- Cloud / Online Courses with the objective of enhancing the skillset of students on Cloud to open up remote career options
- Soft Skills Bootcamp to develop the soft skills of computer engineers / developers / product managers or anyone involved in the digital sector to be a better fit with the requirements of the job market

The overall objective of this Preliminary Stakeholders Engagement Plan (SEP) is to define a program for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the entire project cycle. The Preliminary SEP outlines the ways in which the project team will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns, provide feedback, or make complaints about project and any activities related to the project. The involvement of all identified stakeholders is essential to the success of the project in order to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and stakeholders and to minimize and mitigate environmental and social risks related to the proposed project activities. It is to be noted that the initial assessment determined low Social and Environmental risks and a low risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH).

### 3. Brief Summary of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

The different stakeholders were consulted jointly by the World Bank and BDD Academy and this set up the ground work for the SUL project. An event with the private sector players, experts, training providers and



other stakeholders was organized on February 19-20 2019 in Beirut Digital District, followed by a set of three roundtable discussions. During the event, the envisioned design of the SUL project was presented to the stakeholders and their feedback was gathered and incorporated in the final design. The detailed agenda for this event is provided in Annex I and the list of the 100 attendees is provided in Annex II.

Key takeaways from the event were:

- Government representatives acknowledged the gaps in infrastructure and funding and highlighted the need for Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to move things forward.
- The ministry of education is aware of the gap between the job market requirements and the outdated school curriculum (last update was in 1997) and is counting on extra-curricular activities and the private sector to bridge this gap while the long process of curriculum update has taken place.
- The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) presented their success story of building digital skills in India using a PPP model where they empowered private companies with funding under the umbrella of common curriculum standards and certifications.
- A regular (~yearly) market scan is recommended to identify job market trends under a competency framework that incorporates soft skills and technical skills
- Social Impact bonds are a flexible approach that can be considered down the road by the WBG to finance the SUM initiative.
- Some development funds and CSR arms of the private sector showed interest in collaborating in sub-sequent phases of the SUM initiative; once it has started to show traction

## 4. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

### 4.1 Affected Parties

The main beneficiaries of the SUL program are:

- Lebanese youth aged between 15-34 located across Lebanon.
- Local training providers by scaling and replicating their impact across the country
- Private sector companies who will be connected to graduating participants to provide them with hands-on, real-life learning opportunities (e.g. company projects, internships).
- Universities, as BDD will explore the possibility of partnering with continuing education centers at universities, in order to maximize the outreach of the program and to make the program more sustainable. One of the pilots will also focus on providing university students in the digital and creative sector with practical job experience that increase their chance of employability.

### 4.2 Other Interested Parties

Other interested parties would include organizations that support women and youth empowerment.





### 4.3 Vulnerable Individuals and/or Groups

The project aims for 50% of the beneficiaries to be female. Women have consistently been underrepresented in the technology and digital sector. This project aims to ensure that they have equal representation and to increase the female participation in the region's digital sector. In order to reach a higher number of females, a potential collaboration with organizations that focus on women in tech, such as Women in Data Science, shall be explored and these organizations will be consulted in order to improve the outreach and communication channels with this target group.

The program will also mainly target vulnerable Lebanese youth as beneficiaries. These vulnerable youth will be youth that have lost their jobs due to the internal domestic problems in Lebanon and due to the heightened competition with Syrian refugees.

Amongst the vulnerable beneficiaries there may also be persons with disabilities. The program will aim to involve them in the project in an inclusive manner when possible.

## 5. Stakeholder Engagement Program

### 5.1 Purpose and timing of stakeholder engagement program

The purpose of stakeholder engagement for this project is as follows:

- 1- Create public awareness among stakeholders on the objectives and immediate action plans of the project at hand (on-going).
- 2- Consult on the project detailed design (e.g. as inputs to the Terms of Reference for Service Providers) (early implementation phase)
- 3- Obtain feedback from stakeholders on the implementation and adapt as needed (periodic, throughout implementation phase). In addition, they will be informed on how and when information will be made available to them and about forthcoming opportunities to review information and provide their feedback and views.

### 5.2 Proposed Strategy for Information Disclosure

The main consultation method that will be used will be virtual interviews and virtual discussions with the relevant stakeholders. The consultations will follow the guidelines referenced in the World Bank Technical note on conducting consultations during times of constraint, which is included in Annex III.

Interview/virtual discussions will be held with the training providers, NGOs and the HR (or equivalent) of the private sector companies, and they will in turn relay any information or concerns addressed to them by the students and beneficiaries. In addition, the BDD website (<https://beirutdigitaldistrict.com/bdd-academy>) and BDD Social Media Pages (Facebook and Twitter: @beirutDigitalD) will be utilized to disclose information to the relevant stakeholders.

In addition, the following information will be disclosed using the following channels:

- Call for applications to training providers: To be sent out by email to the providers in the BDD Database, and to be promoted on social media.



- List of trainings to be conducted: To be communicated with NGOs, and through BDD’s social media pages.
- Outcome of training: To be disclosed on BDD’s social media pages.
- List of available jobs: To be posted on the Job Platform that is to be built and promoted to relevant stakeholders

### **5.3 Proposed Strategy for Consultation**

BDD Talent Development Hub will utilize various methods that will be used to consult with each of the stakeholder groups:

- For the youth beneficiaries, the local training providers, private sector companies and universities, BDD Talent Development Hub will mainly conduct virtual interviews and discussions. The initial output of these consultations would be to identify the best fits for the program and to narrow the selection process. At a later stage these discussions would be for receiving feedback and comments regarding project implementation, hindering factors and changing environmental contexts. The comments and feedback will be noted and the appropriate actions will be taken to address any issues or concerns.
- For the private sector players, BDD Talent Development Hub will also conduct surveys, polls and questionnaires in order to gather insights and optimize the program.

### **5.4 Proposed Strategy to Incorporate the View of Vulnerable Groups**

Surveys will be distributed to beneficiaries at the end of the trainings, in addition to randomized calls, to ensure that they did not face any issues with regards to the way the program was carried out and to ensure that the program provides them with the maximum benefits. Survey outcome and feedback will be documented.

### **5.5 Timelines**

The project is split into 2 components and is expected to be implemented in 12 months. Component 1 will commence as soon as the grant is declared effective, and staff will be gradually recruited over a period of 4 months. Component 2 will last for a duration of around 8 months and will begin four months after the start of component 1. The stakeholder consultation process will be an iterative process that will be carried out throughout the duration of the project.

The SEP will remain in the public domain on the World Bank website, for the entire period of project development and will be updated on a regular basis and as needed as the project progresses through its various phases. This is to ensure timely identification of any new stakeholders and interested parties and their involvement in the process of collaboration with the project including any feedback received from them that support successful project implementation. The methods of engagement will also be revised periodically and as needed to maintain their effectiveness and relevance to the project’s evolving environment.



## **5.6 Review of Comments**

Comments from all external stakeholders and beneficiaries will be gathered and reviewed systematically. Comments will be filtered and categorized into:

- 1- Feedback regarding project activities and implementation
- 2- Grievance and complaints

Feedback comments will be reviewed by the communication coordinator, and will be forwarded to each respective team members and stakeholder groups accordingly. Once all feedback is gathered, comments will be addressed back to stakeholders through formal communication highlighting the course of action that was/will be taken to address their comments.

Grievance and complaints comments will be shared with project coordinator and program manager. These comments will be addressed by their severity and importance and will utilize the Grievance Mechanism (GM), outlined in section 7 below.

## **5.7 Future Phases of Project**

BDD Talent Development Hub will issue bi-annual and annual reports in order to report the performance and implementation of project components, including the performance and implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan and grievance mechanism. Furthermore, updates on the implementation of the project, will be periodically posted on the BDD social media channels and website.

# **6. Resources and Responsibilities for Implementing Stakeholder Engagement Activities**

## **6.1 Resources, Management Functions and Responsibilities**

*A core team will be established at the BDD Talent Development Hub to implement the proposed project. It would be composed of an Executive Director, a Program Manager, a Communications Coordinator and a Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator is to act as the main E&S focal point to follow up on the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), grievance mechanism and all provisions of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).*

*The core fiduciary team will be composed of a procurement officer and a financial management officer. It is envisaged that the fiduciary team would represent experts already working at BDD, for which part of their time would be allocated to work on this proposal, These will be qualified in processing procurement and financial transactions with a pertinent knowledge of the market and a proven past experience in similar responsibilities. A fiduciary capacity assessment will be conducted for the BDD Talent Development Hub to verify its fiduciary procedures, the followed standards and principles, used systems, oversight procedures, accountability, reporting, record keeping mechanism, internal and external auditing mechanisms. The assessment will identify the risk and propose mitigations measures accordingly.*



The Program Coordinator will be responsible for implementing the SEP. They will report to the Executive Director, who has overall accountability for all project activities and will be highly involved in the implementation of the SEP. The Executive Director will be responsible to sustain relationships and communicate with the relevant stakeholders as identified in this SEP. All outcomes of the stakeholder engagements will be documented in the regular progress reporting and as per the provisions of the ESCP.

## 7. Grievance Mechanism

The grievance mechanism described in this section includes both complaints and grievance (hereinafter referred to only as 'grievances'). Grievances raised by stakeholders will be managed through a transparent process, readily acceptable to all segments of affected communities and other stakeholders, at no cost and without retribution. In addition, a GM (Grievance Mechanism) log is to be utilized to keep track of all the grievances that are reported and which will be documented as part of the regular progress reporting.

This grievance mechanism sets out the following steps to be taken to resolve grievances, the role of different staff members involved and timeframes to reach a decision on grievances. The types of grievances stakeholders may raise include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of access to project benefits (ex: proposals rejected, training request denied, etc.)
- Health and safety risks; and
- Unacceptable standards of trainings delivered.
- Sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment(SEA/SH) related complaints.

It is critical that stakeholders understand that all grievances lodged, regardless of the project phase or activity being implemented, will follow one single mechanism and will ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the concerned party.

All grantees, such as the training providers, shall sign a legally binding Code of Conduct that will ensure accountability and this Code of Conduct will also serve as a preset condition for receiving any grant.

The GM will be comprised of several layers to resolve complaints starting with the first level where complaints will be channeled to and in the event that the complaint is not resolved at this level, it will then be escalated to a second and higher level to the responsible persons as indicated below. In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they will have the option to appeal the decision either to the executive director of BDD or to the national judiciary.

The channels that are available for stakeholders to register any grievances are as follows:

- Phone: +961.1.660.941
- Email address: [customercare@beirutdigitaldistrict.com](mailto:customercare@beirutdigitaldistrict.com)
- Website: <https://beirutdigitaldistrict.com/>

SEA/SH complaints shall be directly escalated to the Executive Director who will ensure confidentiality and a survivor-centered approach as per the *World Bank's Good Practice Note* and ensure referral of survivors



to the relevant service providers where necessary. The complaint shall be logged onto the GM log<sup>4</sup> and will be documented as part of the BDD's regular progress reporting and as per the provisions of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). BDD will ensure data confidentiality of all registered complainants.

The following personnel are responsible for handling the grievances:

- L1: Customer Care (May Al Hajj)
- L2: CFO/Head of ZRE/BDD Shared Services (Mohamad Itani)
- L3: BDD Academy Executive Director (Elias Boustani)
- L4: BDD/ZRE GM (Mouhamad Rabah)

The hours of operations of the GM shall be from Monday to Friday, 9AM-5PM. The timeline for closure of grievances shall be no longer than 5 working days.

## 8. Monitoring and Reporting

### 8.1 Involvement of stakeholders in monitoring activities

*Monitoring and Evaluation:* BDD Talent Development Hub will establish an appropriate-staff system to closely monitor the outputs and outcomes of different programs and adapt accordingly. Examples of indicators that will be tracked includes: (a) at the output level: number of skills development program supported, number of people trained, percentage of youth and women trained; and (b) at the outcome level: share of graduates placed in jobs, share of graduates reporting enhancing living conditions (e.g. higher wage and earnings).

All contractors that are hired for the project, such as local training providers, shall have their own staff responsible for monitoring the activities and ensuring that everything is on track, in line with WB requirements on E&S aspects as per the ESF. They shall then regularly provide BDD Talent Development Hub with updates on the project and they will be tasked with informing them immediately of any issues that might arise.

### 8.2 Reporting back to stakeholder groups

BDD Talent Development Hub will issue bi-annual and annual reports in order to report the performance and implementation of project components and activities. Furthermore, updates on the implementation of the project, will be periodically posted on the BDD website<sup>5</sup> and social media platforms, and discussed through virtual discussions/interviews that aim at addressing stakeholders as well as beneficiaries to publicly disclose the milestones being achieved throughout the lifetime of the project.

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<sup>4</sup> Refer to Annex III: Grievance Mechanism Log

<sup>5</sup> <https://beirutdigitaldistrict.com/>

## Annex I: SKILLING Up Mashreq (SUM) Building The Partnership Event Agenda

This Annex provides the agenda for the Stakeholder event that took place on February 19-20, 2019.

February 19-20, 2019

Location: Beirut Digital District (BDD), Beirut Lebanon

### AGENDA

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#### OBJECTIVES

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The World Bank Group (WBG) is proposing a new initiative, entitled Skilling Up Mashreq (SUM), that aims to support Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon in skilling up about 500,000 young people in 21<sup>st</sup> century digital skills. To achieve this target, the WBG is proactively engaging with all relevant stakeholders and working on mobilizing private and public institutions, from within the region and outside, into a regional partnership. This will be done through the WBG current and future engagement, leveraging partnerships with governments, professional organizations (Engineers, IT, Business associations), private sector, Development Partners and global players, and strengthening the digital ecosystem to offer trainings as demanded by employers. In Lebanon, the WBG is partnering with Beirut Digital District (BDD) for the implementation of the SUM initiative.

The objective of the *Building the Partnership Event* is to bring together ecosystem of Lebanese government, service providers, financiers, impact investors, donors and other international partners to discuss the “Build, Boost and Broker” (BBB) challenges to meet the SUM objective of training 500,000 youth and women in marketable digital technology skills by 2021.

This event will aim to agree on the big lines of a time bound, implementation-specific and costed program to reach the SUM goal, through support to existing and new entry ecosystem players with committed business plans and readiness to contribute to the ethos and objectives of the SUM initiative.

The sorts of commitments and actions sought from SUM partnerships include:

- Building of the core infrastructure to enable the development of the digital market;
- Boosting local service providers through capacity building, financing, international partnerships;
- Brokering of funding options and expertise transfer.

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## AGENDA

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### Day ONE: Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>

Time	Session	Speaker
8:30 – 9:00	<b>Registration and Coffee</b>	
9:00 – 9:15	<b>Welcoming Remarks</b>	Mouhamad Rabah, President, BDD
9:15 – 9:45	<b>Introducing the SUM Initiative and Workshop Objectives</b> This session will introduce the Skilling Up Mashreq initiative, its rationale, objectives and approach. It will also present the objectives, agenda and expected outcomes of the workshop.	Kamel Braham, Peter Mousley and Angela Elzir, World Bank
9:45 – 10:45	<b>Overview of BDD and the Lebanese tech sector</b> This session will provide an overview of BDD as well as the Lebanese ICT and entrepreneurship sectors, followed by a Q&A session.	Stephanie Abi Abdallah and Elias Boustani, BDD
10:45 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Introduction to the BDD Academy</b> This session will describe the issues in accessing qualified talent and showcase current impactful initiatives. It will introduce the BDD Academy and options for the preliminary operating model of the SUM initiative, followed by Q&A.	Stephanie Abi Abdallah and Elias Boustani, BDD
12:30 – 13:30	<b>Networking and Lunch</b>	
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Government of Lebanon on Digital Skills Development</b> The session will cover the Government's plan to skill the Lebanese workforce with digital skills and strengthen the infrastructure and policy ecosystem. It will be followed by a Q&A session.	Dr. Fadi Yarak, Ministry of Education and Higher Education; Dr. Nabil Yamout, Ministry of Telecommunications; Mrs. Yasmina El Khoury, Prime Minister Office <b>Facilitator:</b> Haneen Sayed
14:30 – 15:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
15:00 – 17:00	<b>Learning from international experiences</b> This session will showcase the Indian National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) model and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) approaches to skills development. The session will be followed by a Q&A session and discussion on how the lessons learned could be applied to the Lebanese context.	Nidhi Batra with Sabeena Mathayas and Akshay Kashyap, NSDC; Heike Harmgart, EBRD <b>Facilitator:</b> Kamel Braham, World Bank
17:00 – 17:15	<b>Concluding Day One</b> This session will summarize the key takeaways from each session.	Stephanie Abi Abdallah, BDD Kamel Braham and Peter Mousley, World Bank
17:30 – 19:30	<b>Cocktails, Snacks and Networking</b>	

## DAY TWO: Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>

Time	Session	Facilitator/Speaker
9:30 – 10:00	<b>Coffee and Networking</b>	
10:00 – 12:00	<p><b>Financing digital skills</b></p> <p>This session will outline the potential existing sources of financing, what can be done to get it moving and learning from international experience on innovative solutions to increase and diversify the sources. The session will be following by a Q&amp;A discussion.</p>	<p><b>Presenters:</b> Peter Nicholas and Cooper Renfro, UK Social Finance; Nidhi Batra with Sabeena Mathayas and Akshay Kashyap, NSDC</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Peter Mousley, World Bank</p>
12:00 – 13:30	<b>Lunch with Saroj Kumar Jha, World Bank Regional Country Director</b>	
13:30 – 15:30	<p><b>Designing the SUM Implementation Plan</b></p> <p><i>Breakout Group A: Designing scalable ecosystem initiatives that meet the needs of the private sector</i></p> <p>This group will identify the mechanisms to assess the needs of the private sector (current and future), learn from international experience, brainstorm on the best initiatives to bridge the gap between talent supply and demand.</p> <p><i>Breakout Group B: Role of Government entities in building the talent of the future</i></p> <p>This group will identify the key government entities, their respective roles and programs/projects to build on for the implementation and scale up of SUM.</p> <p><i>Breakout Group C: Mobilizing Financing – How can skills be built financially?</i></p> <p>This group will identify potential sources of financing (e.g. grants from the Donor Community, CSR, Impact Bond), their investment priorities and how to channel the investments to maximize impact.</p>	<p><b>Facilitator:</b> Stephanie Abi Abdallah, BDD</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Paul Welton, World Bank</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Marcel Rached, International Finance Corporation</p>
15:30 – 17:00	<p><b>Reporting Back, putting the pieces together and next steps</b></p> <p>This session will report back on the outcomes of the group breakout sessions. It will put pieces together and identify the next steps in building the implementation plan of the SUM.</p>	<p>Kamel Braham and Peter Mousley, World Bank Stephanie Abi Abdallah, BDD</p>



## Annex II: SKILLING Up Mashreq (SUM) Building The Partnership Event Agenda List of Attendees

Organization	Name	Title
Fransabank SAL	May Jabbour Rihan	Head of Corporate Social Responsibility & Marketing Intelligence
Bank Audi	Gebran Gebran	Head of Customer Experience COO Office
Social Finance	Peter Nicholas	Director
Bank Audi	Raffy A. Karamanian	Head of Digital Banking
USAID	Mervyn Farroe	Deputy Mission Director
Honorary Consulate General of Finland, Beirut	Zafer Chaoui	Honorary Consul General
National Association for Science & Research	Dr. Sirine Taleb	Scientific Committee Coordinator
SGBL	Jimmy El Azar	Manager, Head of Investment Finance
Let's Graduate	Farah Farchoukh	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Don Telecom Sal Offshore	Zakie Karam	General Manager
Kingdom of the Netherlands	Floris van Slijpe	Senior Policy Officer (Sustainable Economic Development)
Consultant	Fawzieh Makkawi	Learning and Development Consultant
EU	Donia Jemail	Senior Communication Expert
Edge Ryders	Hugi Asgeirsson	Director, Edgeryders Nordic
The Makers Hub	Eng. Sabine El Kahi	Manager Director
ACT, ActiveAdvocacy for Communities of Tomorrow	Paula Sroujean Abdel Hak	President
Ministry of Economy and Trade	Mr. Imad Youssef	<i>Expert</i>
Woufra Capital	Ali Abdulaziz	CEO
Fransabank SAL	Taher Karaki	IT Enterprise Architect
Cherpa	Ibrahim Ezzedine	CEO
PMO	Yasmina Khoury	Head BI
PWC / LLWB	Dania George	SM
MOT	Nabil Yamout	Advisor
Kashida Learning	Ruba Mourad	Director of Learning Experience Design
MEHE	Fadi Yarak	Director General
AFD	Rami Boustani	<i>Inter Education</i>
USJ	Dany Mezher	Director INCI
CSR AlAhli Group (Emirati group)	Danny Casprini	Communications Manager
Ministry of Finance	Fida Kotob	Senior Auditor / Accountant
Ministry of Finance / UNDP	Abdel Rahim Ayoubi	Economic Officer
Nooreed	Nour Jabra	Co-Founder
Consultant	Hoda Salman	Consultant
KfW	Klaus Kirchmann	Senior Consultant
EU	Virginie Cossoul	Attaché
SEFactory	Zeina Saab	Co-Founder
LLWB / DAN	Eva Turk	Board Member Steering Committee
Dfid	Richard Rose	Private Sector Development Adviser
Ministry of State for Economic Empowerment for Women & Youth	Maya Khoury	Consultant to the Minister

Asher Center USEK	Elie Akhrass	Advisor
Bank Audi	Hasmig Dantziguian Khoury	Head of CSE
Kashida Learning	Raneem Mourad	Managing Director
Bank Audi	Randa Safah	Manager Investments Group Finance
Social Finance	Cooper Renfro	Manager
DOT Lebanon	Walid Abu Saifan	Tech and Curriculum Advisor
AUB	Ayman Kayssi	Assoc Dean
Foundation Mouna Bistros	Jean Vartanian	Director
IEA	Marc Metri	Director of Innovation
Fransabank SAL	Ziad Arnaout	Analyst
IDEAS	Ghaiath Al Barazi	Chairman
OGERO	Zeina Bouharb	
Injaz Lebanon	Samar Dani	
GIZ	Dr. Christiane Gaehtgens	Representative/Head
Kiron Open Higher Education	Tobias Keion	CEO
Kiron Open Higher Education	Laura Marwede	Chief Partnerships Officer
Kiron Open Higher Education	Mahmoud Halimeh	
Codi	Samar Fatayri	Trainer
Makerbrane	Sabine de Maussion	COO
TLE	Rana Chmaitelly	CEO
AFD	Nabila Haddad	Project Manager
Ministry of State for Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth	Nada Makki	Projects Coordinator
Codi	Jad Sarat	Lead Trainer
Nooreed	Fady Lamaa	CEO
Fransabank	Dania KASSAR	Head of Marketing and Corporate Communication
LAU	Dr. Haidar Harmanani	Ass. Dean Professor
GCNL	Dina Harake	Executive Director
SEFactory	Fadi Bizri	Co-Founder
Dfid UK Aid	Hanan Al Fakih	Economic Advisor
Youth Advisory Group (WB)	Omar Kreidly	Youth advisor
MOF	Nelly Habib	UNDP Project Coordinator
UNDP	Karim Kantara	Economist
AUB	Mona Itani	Educator / Riyada for Social Innovation
Fransabank	May RIHAN	Head of CSR and Marketing Intelligence
CSR AlAhli Group (Emirati group)	Danny Casprini	Communications Manager
Geek Express	Ali Yassine	Business Development
TeensWhoCode	Nour Atrissi	CEO
MOL	Ms. Denise Dahrouj	Acting Head, External Relations
USAID	William Butterfield	
MOET	Razi El Hage	Economic Expert
Cherpa	Ibrahim Ezzedine	CEO
IDEAS	Joelle Zlaket	Project Manager
BDD	Stephanie Abi Abdallah	

BDD	Elias Boustani	Conusltant
NSDC	Nidhi Batra	
NSDC	Akshay Kashyap	
NSDC	Sabeena Mathayas	
IFC	Marcel Rached	
IFC	Saad Sabra	
IFC	Fatma Aglan	
IFC	Selma Rasavac	
WB	Saroj Kumar Jha	
WB	Paul Welton	
WB	Peter Mousley	
WB	Kamel Braham	
WB	Haneen Sayed	
WB	Peter McConaghy	
WB	Zeina El Khalil	
WB	Angela Elzir	
WB	Mohamed Yassine	
WB	Adel Gaaloul	Consultant
WB	Mirvat Haddad	

### **Annex III: Technical Note: Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings**

This Annex provides an overview on the World Bank protocol for conducting consultations during times of constraint.

With the outbreak and spread of COVID-19, people have been advised, or may be mandated by national or local law, to exercise social distancing, and specifically to avoid public gatherings to prevent and reduce the risk of the virus transmission. Countries have taken various restrictive measures, some imposing strict restrictions on public gatherings, meetings and people's movement, and others advising against public group events. At the same time, the general public has become increasingly aware and concerned about the risks of transmission, particularly through social interactions at large gatherings.

These restrictions have implications for World Bank-supported operations. In particular, they will affect Bank requirements for public consultation and stakeholder engagement in projects, both under implementation and preparation. WHO has issued technical guidance in dealing with COVID-19, including: (i) **Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Action Plan Guidance Preparedness and Response**; (ii) Risk Communication and Community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response; (iii) COVID-19 risk communication package for healthcare facilities; (iv) Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19; and (v) a guide to preventing and addressing social stigma associated with COVID-19. All these documents are available on the WHO website through the following link: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>.

This Note offers suggestions to World Bank task teams for advising counterpart agencies on managing public consultation and stakeholder engagement in their projects, with the recognition that the situation is developing rapidly and careful regard needs to be given to national requirements and any updated guidance issued by WHO. It is important that the alternative ways of managing consultation and stakeholder engagement discussed with clients are in accordance with the local applicable laws and policies, especially those related to media and communication. The suggestions set out below are subject to confirmation that they are in accordance with existing laws and regulations applying to the project.

**Investment projects under implementation.** All projects under implementation are likely to have public consultation and stakeholder engagement activities planned and committed as part of project design. These activities may be described in different project documents, and will involve a variety of stakeholders. Commonly planned avenues of such engagement are public hearings, community meetings, focus group discussions, field surveys and individual interviews. With growing concern about the risk of virus spread, there is an urgent need to adjust the approach and methodology for continuing stakeholder consultation and engagement. Taking into account the importance of confirming compliance with national law requirements, below are some suggestions for task teams' consideration while advising their clients:

Task teams will need to review their project, jointly with the PMUs, and should:

- Identify and review planned activities under the project requiring stakeholder engagement and public consultations.

- Assess the level of proposed direct engagement with stakeholders, including location and size of proposed gatherings, frequency of engagement, categories of stakeholders (international, national, local) etc.
- Assess the level of risks of the virus transmission for these engagements, and how restrictions that are in effect in the country / project area would affect these engagements.
- Identify project activities for which consultation/engagement is critical and cannot be postponed without having significant impact on project timelines. For example, selection of resettlement options by affected people during project implementation. Reflecting the specific activity, consider viable means of achieving the necessary input from stakeholders (see further below).
- Assess the level of ICT penetration among key stakeholder groups, to identify the type of communication channels that can be effectively used in the project context.

Based on the above, task teams should discuss and agree with PMUs the specific channels of communication that should be used while conducting stakeholder consultation and engagement activities. The following are some considerations while selecting channels of communication, in light of the current COVID-19 situation:

- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings;
- If smaller meetings are permitted, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels, including webex, zoom and skype;
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Traditional channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Where direct engagement with project affected people or beneficiaries is necessary, such as would be the case for Resettlement Action Plans or Indigenous Peoples Plans preparation and implementation, identify channels for direct communication with each affected household via a context specific combination of email messages, mail, online platforms, dedicated phone lines with knowledgeable operators;
- Each of the proposed channels of engagement should clearly specify how feedback and suggestions can be provided by stakeholders;
- An appropriate approach to conducting stakeholder engagement can be developed in most contexts and situations. However, in situations where none of the above means of communication are considered adequate for required consultations with stakeholders, the team should discuss

with the PMU whether the project activity can be rescheduled to a later time, when meaningful stakeholder engagement is possible. Where it is not possible to postpone the activity (such as in the case of ongoing resettlement) or where the postponement is likely to be for more than a few weeks, the task team should consult with the OESRC to obtain advice and guidance.

**Investment projects under preparation.** Where projects are under preparation and stakeholder engagement is about to commence or is ongoing, such as in the project E&S planning process, stakeholder consultation and engagement activities should not be deferred, but rather designed to be fit for purpose to ensure effective and meaningful consultations to meet project and stakeholder needs. Some suggestions for advising clients on stakeholder engagement in such situations are given below. These suggestions are subject to the coronavirus situation in country, and restrictions put in place by governments. The task team and the PMU should:

- Review the country COVID-19 spread situation in the project area, and the restrictions put in place by the government to contain virus spread;
- Review the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP, if it exists) or other agreed stakeholder engagement arrangements, particularly the approach, methods and forms of engagement proposed, and assess the associated potential risks of virus transmission in conducting various engagement activities;
- Be sure that all task team and PIU members articulate and express their understandings on social behavior and good hygiene practices, and that any stakeholder engagement events be preceded with the procedure of articulating such hygienic practices.
- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings, and minimize direct interaction between project agencies and beneficiaries / affected people;
- If smaller meetings are permitted, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels, including webex, zoom and skype meetings;
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, public announcements and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Such channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Employ online communication tools to design virtual workshops in situations where large meetings and workshops are essential, given the preparatory stage of the project. Webex, Skype, and in low ICT capacity situations, audio meetings, can be effective tools to design virtual workshops. The format of such workshops could include the following steps:

- *Virtual registration of participants*: Participants can register online through a dedicated platform.
  - *Distribution of workshop materials to participants, including agenda, project documents, presentations, questionnaires and discussion topics*: These can be distributed online to participants.
  - *Review of distributed information materials*: Participants are given a scheduled duration for this, prior to scheduling a discussion on the information provided.
  - *Discussion, feedback collection and sharing*:
    - ✓ Participants can be organized and assigned to different topic groups, teams or virtual “tables” provided they agree to this.
    - ✓ Group, team and table discussions can be organized through social media means, such as webex, skype or zoom, or through written feedback in the form of an electronic questionnaire or feedback forms that can be emailed back.
  - *Conclusion and summary*: The chair of the workshop will summarize the virtual workshop discussion, formulate conclusions and share electronically with all participants.
- In situations where online interaction is challenging, information can be disseminated through digital platform (where available) like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, Project weblinks/ websites, and traditional means of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, phone calls and mails with clear description of mechanisms for providing feedback via mail and / or dedicated telephone lines. All channels of communication need to clearly specify how stakeholders can provide their feedback and suggestions.
  - *Engagement with direct stakeholders for household surveys*: There may be planning activities that require direct stakeholder engagement, particularly in the field. One example is resettlement planning where surveys need to be conducted to ascertain socioeconomic status of affected people, take inventory of their affected assets, and facilitate discussions related to relocation and livelihood planning. Such survey activities require active participation of local stakeholders, particularly the potentially adversely affected communities. However, there may be situations involving indigenous communities, or other communities that may not have access to the digital platforms or means of communication, teams should develop specially tailored stakeholder engagement approaches that will be appropriate in the specific setting. The teams should reach out to the regional PMs for ENB and Social Development or to the ESSA for the respective region, in case they need additional support to develop such tailored approaches.
  - In situations where it is determined that meaningful consultations that are critical to the conduct of a specific project activity cannot be conducted in spite of all reasonable efforts on the part of the client supported by the Bank, the task team should discuss with the client whether the proposed project activities can be postponed by a few weeks in view of the virus spread risks. This would depend on the COVID-19 situation in the country, and the government policy requirements to contain the virus spread. Where it is not possible to postpone the activity (such as in the case of ongoing resettlement) or where the postponement is likely to be for more than a few weeks, the task team should consult with the OESRC to obtain advice and guidance.

